

TRIBUTE TO CORY GARDNER

Madam President, I also want to recognize CORY GARDNER. While we never served on the same committee, I had the pleasure of working with him on a number of issues.

We were able to come together with a group of our colleagues and pass a law designating 9-8-8 as a national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline. The designation will make it easier for people to access this critically important lifeline when they really need it. I thank CORY for his partnership and leadership on this issue.

CORY also worked diligently to secure the passage of the Great American Outdoors Act last summer. This law permanently funds the Land and Water Conservation Fund and addresses a maintenance backlog on Federal parks and public lands. The Great American Outdoors Act is a real victory for the environment and conservation.

I thank CORY for his service and wish him the best as he leaves the Senate.

TRIBUTE TO MARTHA MCSALLY

Madam President, I also want to thank MARTHA MCSALLY for her service in this Chamber. MARTHA is a veteran of the Air Force and has always been a fighter. In fact, when you say "veteran of the Air Force," you are really understating her role in the Air Force. She fought to become the first American woman to fly a fighter jet in combat. She fought to become the first American woman to command a fighter squadron in combat, and she continued fighting while a Member of the U.S. Senate.

Indeed, MARTHA was a steadfast champion for the well-being of our servicemembers, military families, and veterans during her time on the Armed Services Committee. She worked to include language in the fiscal year 2020 National Defense Authorization Act improving the effectiveness of sexual assault investigations in the military and strengthening support for victims.

MARTHA also played a key role in helping enact over 30 provisions in the fiscal year 2020 NDAA to address the systemic crisis of privatized housing and help remedy the mistreatment of military families, and she teamed with Senators TESTER and SULLIVAN to pass legislation enhancing the tools the Department of Veterans Affairs uses to meet the mental health needs of veterans. These accomplishments are only a few examples of the important work MARTHA did here, but they illustrate her wholehearted commitment to bettering the lives of those who do so much for our country.

I attribute all of this great success and achievement—first woman fighter pilot, first woman to lead a squadron in combat, and more—to a simple reason. MARTHA was born and raised in Warwick, RI, right next to my hometown of Cranston, RI. MARTHA's close relative was the mayor of Cranston. My dad worked as a custodian in the school system. He respected, admired,

and was a friend of Jim Taft. MARTHA's father was also one of the most respected lawyers in Rhode Island, someone who was a tenacious and bright lawyer. That tradition is carried on by her brother Mark, whom I had the privilege and pleasure to know while I was practicing law in Rhode Island.

It is a wonderful family, and she has brought great distinction to not only the Senate, to not only the State of Arizona, but also to the State of Rhode Island. I wish her the very best going forward.

TRIBUTE TO KAMALA HARRIS

Madam President, finally, while KAMALA HARRIS is not leaving the Senate entirely, I would like to take a moment to recognize and thank her as she moves to her new role as Vice President of the United States and, according to the Constitution, as President of this body.

KAMALA is relentlessly determined to help and support the most vulnerable Americans. She has helped lead the charge to protect Dreamers, expand healthcare coverage, and reform our criminal justice system. KAMALA dedicated her Senate tenure to policies that make America a more equitable country and ensure equal opportunities and rights for communities of color.

KAMALA is also a former prosecutor, and she brought a prosecutor's incisiveness and grit with her to this body.

She led the case against many of the Trump administration's most harmful policies and nominees, and I know she will bring that tenacity to the Office of Vice President of the United States.

I also know that she will help guide and heal our Nation as we continue to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

I wish her well as she begins her new role, and I look forward to working with her and President-Elect Biden to meet the many challenges before us.

To all of my colleagues who are departing the Senate, I give you my greatest respect and admiration for your service to your States, to the Senate, and to the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAMER). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, that the postcloture time on the Atchley nomination expire at 11:30 a.m., Thursday, December 17; further, if the nomination is confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO LINDA BEHNKEN

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, it is getting toward the end of the week here. We still have got a lot of work to do in the U.S. Senate, particularly on a relief package and end-of-the-year appropriations. So we are working hard on that.

But I also want to take the opportunity, given it is the end of the week, to do what I consider one of my favorite activities of the entire week each week in the Senate, and that is talking about someone in my State who is making a difference, helping out our communities and making Alaska one of the best States—the best State, in my view—in the country. This is the individual we call the Alaskan of the Week.

So I want to do an acknowledgment to some of our Hill reporters who have taken an interest in the "Alaskan of the Week" each week. I think sometimes because they recognize it is finishing up the week. We are not yet done yet, though. We have a lot of work to do. But I also appreciate them reporting on it because it is just good to see stories about people who are doing good work for their State and their community.

What we try to do with this series, which we have been doing now for a number of years, is to talk about people who don't always get the recognition that they deserve, people who are making a big difference. You know, Alaska, like really every other State in the country, is experiencing serious challenges right now as a result of COVID-19, but I am confident, just like the rest of the country, we will get through this more resilient than ever.

We have a saying. I certainly love this saying: Tough times don't last, but tough people do. Americans, Alaskans, North Dakotans are tough, and we are going to get through this.

I would like to introduce our Alaskan of the Week, Linda Behnken, from the gorgeous city of Sitka, AK, in Southeast Alaska. The "Paris of the Pacific," it is called, Sitka. A fun fact about Sitka, it is the largest city in the United States by land area, encompassing over 4,800 square miles, including water. That is big. The population is fairly big for our State. It is beautiful. If you haven't been to Sitka, you have got to go. It is gorgeous.

Now, Linda—boy, talk about Linda. Linda is innovative, caring, and she has a deep and abiding commitment to our great State, her community, and to the profession that she has devoted her life to, one that is revered and so important in Alaska, and that is commercial fishing.

For more than 30 years now, Linda has been on a boat catching fish out of Alaska's waters. It is the best seafood, mind you, in the world. No doubt about that one—wild Alaskan seafood. Not only is she a successful fisherman, which is, of course, a full-time job, she has also worked to ensure that Alaska continues to have sustainable fisheries.

We are what I call the superpower of seafood. Over 60 percent of all fish caught in the United States is harvested in Alaska's waters—6-0. That is huge. But we need to make sure we have oceans that are clean and sustainable and that the profession is safe and small fishermen can thrive and the young fishermen can enter the profession. That is what Linda has been focused on for her entire career in Alaska.

So for this work and so much more, including a huge role in helping needy families, particularly during this pandemic, Linda was recently awarded the prestigious Heinz Award for the Environment, named after the late U.S. Senator John Heinz. It is a very prestigious award.

Here is the thing. Linda didn't even apply for it. She didn't seek it. She was sought out and I believe shocked when she found out she received this very prestigious award that comes with a \$250,000 cash prize. Now, that is a big deal. I will say more about that cash prize in a minute.

Let me tell you a bit about Linda's story and how she came to be such a passionate steward of our fisheries, of our sea, and of our ocean. Born and raised in Connecticut, Linda headed to Alaska in 1982 during a summer break from college. She wanted to make some money. She heard that one of the ways she could do it was to fish in the great State of Alaska.

She took a ferry from Bellingham, WA, to Sitka, and she immediately fell in love with this gorgeous—and I mean gorgeous—community the minute she got off the boat. It took her about a month pounding the docks to find a deckhand job. There weren't a lot of women in this business then. She did eventually find not just a job but a wonderful community.

"The fishing community," she said, "is full of independent and resourceful people who are really there for each other" in their times of need. She also described how, when the fishing was done or when it was bad weather, people would gather around the docks. Some would light up the grill. Some would bring pie, a loaf of bread. Instruments would come out. Stories were told. Kids played. Linda said: "I found a sense of community that I really hadn't [found]" anywhere else.

So she loved it. She went back to the lower 48 to finish her undergraduate degree, but Alaska was always with her. She knew that she had found a home and a mission to help create more sustainable fisheries in the great State of Alaska.

To that end, she enrolled in a master's degree program in resource development at Yale and then came back to Alaska.

"What I saw going on in the ocean drove me to . . . graduate school." During that time, in the 1980s, she said that the way the fishing was managed wasn't working well for the smaller fishermen, nor was there much of an emphasis back then on sustainability.

When she came back to Alaska, she began to fish again, eventually buying her own small commercial fishing boat, which she now fishes with her husband and two sons who have themselves been fishing since a very, very young age.

I have always said that the Alaskan fisherman is the quintessential small business man and small business woman. It is often family businesses. They take huge risks. They create a great product. They work hard as can be. They are the quintessential small business men and women in America, and Linda proves the point.

She became the executive director of the Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association, which is an alliance of small-boat commercial fishermen committed to sustainable and safe fisheries.

Let me talk about safety on our waters in Alaska. Fishing, particularly in Alaska's waters, is one of the most dangerous jobs out there. Linda has had many harrowing stories—caught out fishing in the frigid waters for hours in the center of storms, man overboard, challenges, wind whisking away equipment. But all in all, it is much safer now than it used to be when Linda first started to fish. Then, when a certain fishery opened, everyone rushed out at once to get as much fish as possible regardless of the conditions. That has changed. Now fishing is a safer—but still dangerous—business in my great State.

Linda was also involved in limiting bigger commercial vessels from operating in the waters of Southeast Alaska and worked for more stringent environmental regulations on the cruise ship industry.

Among other things related to fisheries, she served 9 years on the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and is a founding member of the Alaska Sustainable Fisheries Trust, which promotes Alaska seafood, helps younger men and women enter the field, and helps feed the hungry from the bounty of the sea—all of which contributed to her winning the Heinz Award.

This pandemic that we are experiencing has negatively impacted so many lives, but it has also brought out some of the best in us in Alaska and in America, people across the country, reaching out to their neighbors, volunteering their time to do as much as they can.

This includes Linda. When she read early on in the pandemic that a grocery store in her area stopped accepting checks, she got to work. Working with her groups, the Alaska Sustainable Fisheries Trust and the Alaska Longline Fishermen's Association, they began delivering food—fish—to people's doors, locally caught and processed seafood to those who were in need.

So far—get this—with their partners, they have provided over 400,000 pounds of delicious Alaska seafood. They brought in 400,000 pounds—wow—to children's programs, food pantries, women's shelters, Tribal organizations,

and military organizations. You get the picture. She is working hard. They have done amazing work. And I want to thank her and so many who worked with her for this great effort.

Something else that Linda did, a decision she made for her community. Earlier, I spoke about that cash prize that came with the Heinz Award—\$250,000. She took \$100,000 of that money, which was her prize money, and donated it back to the organization that she helped found, the Alaska Sustainable Fisheries Trust, to work on sustainable fisheries, combating climate change, and to help young fishermen enter the profession so we have sustainable fisheries going forward.

I am sure Linda probably heard the good news: Our legislation, my legislation, the Save Our Seas 2.0 legislation to clean up our oceans passed the Senate recently and is on its way to the President's desk for his signature. More good news.

As she said: "We won't have jobs if we don't take care of our fisheries." Keep them sustainable "and get young people into the profession." People like Linda—committed, organized, generous of spirit, hard-working, in love with what she does in her State and her community—will get us through this pandemic. These are the people in Alaska, in America. And it is people like her that will also ensure that Alaska remains the superpower of seafood, not just for America but for the world.

So, Linda, for all that you do, for all that you are going to continue to do, thank you, thank you, thank you. Great work, and congratulations on being our Alaskan of the Week.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

WESTERN SAHARA AND ABRAHAM ACCORDS

Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, 6 days ago, on the 10th, I came down to the floor after having discovered something that happened. I think it really was not intentional the way it happened, but I would like to share that with you and share the frustration that I have.

There is a situation that is taking place and has taken place for 30-some years in Western Sahara. This is an area where after a colonial period, the different colonies in there were attached to other countries. In the case of Western Sahara, that actually had been attached to Spain. It was called Spanish Sahara at that time. This was way back in pre-1966. One of the many good things that President Trump has done is that he has put together this program called the Abraham accords, and that is bringing the Arab population and the Jewish population in the Middle East together. This is something that Presidents have tried to do for a long period of time—both Democrat and Republican, not successful. And this has become successful because the thing that was announced just 6 days ago was that Morocco was going to salvage a relationship with Israel.